

In 1972, Congress amended the Higher Education Act by creating the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant to provide direct financial aid to low-income students so they could have the same access to higher education and opportunity for success as their higher income peers.

The program was later named the Pell grant for its original sponsor, Senator Pell, Democrat from Rhode Island. The original bill was signed into law by Republican President Richard Nixon, and the program has maintained this original bipartisan support over the last 50 years.

To date, more than 80 million students have received a Pell grant to go to college since the program was created. Currently, nearly 7 million students are going to college with a Pell grant, or about 40 percent of undergraduate students. In my district in the great city of Philadelphia, nearly 22,000 students receive \$90.5 million to pursue their higher education goals.

The Federal investment in Pell grants is targeted to students with demonstrated financial need, students whose families have incomes of \$40,000 or less. The investment pays off by increasing college completion and economic mobility.

On the 50-year anniversary of the Pell Grant Program, I encourage the United States to celebrate national Pell grant day by recognizing the current students and successful graduates who have benefited from the program by telling their student success stories and encouraging the same access for future students, demonstrating the importance of what the Pell grant has meant.

The Pell grant is significant to the future of this country, and it is important that we all stand up for this program that has been valuable to our young people for the future, no matter what side of the aisle we are on.

#### THE PERILS OF EXPERTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, we all know the tale of "The Emperor's New Clothes." Grifters convince an emperor that they are expert tailors who weave a cloth so fine that only the virtuous can see it. The emperor wraps himself in nothing and parades the streets as all the townspeople compete to signal their own virtue by proclaiming how beautiful the material is, even though their own common sense tells them otherwise. This scheme is successful until a little boy who knows better states the obvious.

For 2 years now, we were told by the experts that they could stop COVID-19 if everyone did exactly as they commanded. I am science, as one put it. They quashed debate within the medical community and ridiculed, censored, and fired any dissenters.

Looking back, we can clearly see what a self-destructive folly they produced. Study after study now confirms the obvious, that the mask mandate, school closures, home detention orders, and business closures had virtually no impact on the virus. But they did appalling damage to the economy, seriously harmed children in ways we are still cataloging, and cost untold lives due to suicides, drug and alcohol overdoses, delayed health screenings and treatments, and poverty-related deaths.

This recent, tragic experience should warn us all to be much more skeptical of surrendering common sense to so-called experts and of suppressing free debate over what science actually is telling us, which brings us to the Democrats' ongoing and escalating war on fossil fuels.

The road they have placed us on leads to a bleak future of unaffordable energy, rolling blackouts, empty shelves, and increasingly brutal rationing of every watt of electricity and drop of gasoline that we once took for granted.

Gasoline prices are already the highest ever seen in this country as we have discouraged production. Electricity prices are skyrocketing, pushed by the crushing cost of renewables. Utilities across the country are now warning of summer blackouts because renewable mandates have destabilized the electricity grid.

Joe Biden and the Democrats promised to wage war on fossil fuels, and they have succeeded. On his first day in office, he canceled the Keystone pipeline, which today should have been completed and delivering 830,000 barrels of crude oil every day into American markets. He canceled oil and gas exploration on Federal lands. Just last month, he withdrew 1 million acres of land from exploration and production in oil-rich Alaska and the Gulf of Mexico.

And he blames Vladimir Putin? Under the progrowth policies of the Trump administration, America didn't need Putin's oil. We were energy independent for the first time in our lifetimes. We were producing more oil than Russia and even Saudi Arabia. The day the Democrats took office, gasoline was averaging \$2.39 a gallon.

Today's sky-high fuel prices are aggravating supply chain breakdowns and adding to consumer prices. Acreage once devoted to growing corn for food is now used to produce ethanol, which requires trading an entire acre of corn to produce just 550 gallons of ethanol.

The irony is, at a time when these Green New Deal policies can't guarantee enough electricity to keep the lights on this summer at any price, these Democrat elitists are telling families to buy electric cars. Where do they think the electricity for their electric cars comes from? Eighty percent comes from fossil fuels that they are ruthlessly shutting down.

The excuse for all of this, of course, is to stop global warming, but they

cannot account for why it is that there have been periods throughout paleo history when temperatures have been much higher and also much lower than they are today. Nor do they account for the infinitely more powerful natural forces that shape our constantly changing climate.

The blind reliance on handpicked experts and the suppression of dissent in our approach to COVID cost lives and destroyed the most prosperous economic expansion in our lifetimes. But its excesses pale in comparison to what the green left is now doing to our society. The pain and damage we are feeling today is just the first bitter taste of what is to come if they prevail.

Of one thing we can be certain: Whether or not we destroy our Nation's prosperity by continuing the Democrats' war on fossil fuels, the Earth will continue to warm and cool, as it has for billions of years. The only question we can answer is whether ours will be a future of abundance or scarcity, prosperity or poverty, comfort or misery.

#### FAREWELL TO JULIE NICKSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge my chief of staff, Julie Little Nickson, who, after 22 years of service in the House and 20 years in my office, will soon be departing the Hill.

Let me take a moment to acknowledge Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR, who Julie worked for prior to coming to my office and for her gracious help with Julie's transition to my office.

Julie joined my staff in 2002 and quickly distinguished herself as a skilled manager and leader of Team Lee. She undoubtedly got to know many district constituents and hit the ground running.

Her keen understanding of the intersection of policy, politics, and procedure has helped drive so many accomplishments through the decades. She has also ensured that my constituents understand the relationship between our work in Washington, D.C., and their daily lives.

From her work advancing my efforts as coauthor of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, back in 2003 to the development and enactment of the historic American Women Quarters act in 2020, Julie has been the strategic guiding force propelling my agenda. She makes sure that the inclusion of staff is prominent in everything I do and that staff is recognized and is central to her work.

She has been the key and steady leader of my work to prevent the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Of course, that work grew and expanded to include numerous efforts to end our forever wars and rein in unchecked executive war powers, including my work to repeal the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs.